



File Code: 1950

Date: December 21, 2010

Dear Reader:

The Crescent Ranger District has made a decision on the Three Trails OHV Project and the Final Environmental Impact Statement is now available. John Allen, Supervisor of the Deschutes National Forest, selected Alternative E in its entirety. It provides the best balance and offers the scenery, challenge, and “saddle time” riders seek, while caring for the resources and providing for other non-motorized pursuits. Total open road density on the National Forest System Roads drops from 3.8 to 2.0 miles per square mile averaged over 16 subwatersheds.

In summary, the decision includes:

- About five miles of currently closed Maintenance Level 1 roads will be opened and used for OHV routes for all classes of vehicles.
- About 115 miles of currently open Maintenance Level 2 roads will be closed (changed to Maintenance Level 1) to offset effects of designation of motorized trails. All Maintenance Level 1 roads would remain open for administrative access.
- About 43 miles of currently open Maintenance Level 2 roads will be converted to trails; of those 11 miles will be for Class II and 32 miles for Classes I and III.
- About 94 miles of user-created trails that are located in inappropriate areas and/or redundant, will be closed and rehabilitated.
- About 80 miles of shared use roads for all classes of vehicles.
- Motorized and non-motorized uses will be separated as much as possible except in wet areas (riparian reserves/Riparian Habitat Conservation Areas) of the two-mile stretch of the Metolius-Windigo trail, by creating parallel trails wherever possible. Equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers, and motorized users will continue to share portions of the trail due to limited options caused by terrain, land ownership, and proper riparian function of the wet areas. Signing will be used to encourage respectful behavior by all users.
- An underpass for Highway 97 that links the Rivers and Walker segments for all types of vehicles will be designed to accommodate big game and smaller wildlife species as well.
- To offset a potential decrease in availability to an existing wildlife guzzler because of the designated trail system, a new wildlife guzzler installed on Walker Mountain.
- A day use parking area with non-motorized trail to the Little Deschutes River would be constructed to replace motorized access that occurs now.
- A railroad crossing south of 5825 road for all types of vehicles.

Alternative E includes adoption of some appropriately located user-created trails and new construction for a total of 142 miles of trail plus 80 miles of connecting high clearance roads for a total 222 route miles. This includes 21 miles of trails engineered for jeeps and other 4-wheel drive vehicles. There are four strategically-placed staging areas in Junction, Rivers, and Walker trail segments. It incorporates most of the design features that the riders requested (longer loops,



interconnected trail systems, access to public goods and services). It also provides some tighter loops in some areas and avoids an extensive trail system where big game migration corridors are more likely to occur. Motorized and non-motorized uses are separated as much as possible on the Metolius-Windigo Trail. It incorporates five scenic viewpoints. There is foot trail access to water along the Little Deschutes River; however no new bridges will be constructed. A season of use will generally be from May 1 to October 31, dependent upon site-specific conditions.

Selection of Alternative E includes all identified mitigation measures and monitoring specified within Chapter 2 of the FEIS. Implementation is expected to start in Summer of 2011.

If you have requested a copy of the Final Environmental Impact Statement, or a compact disc we will be automatically sending you one if it is not included in this mailing. Otherwise, all documents are also available on the Internet in PDF format at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/projects/units/crescent/blt/index.shtml>

The 45-day appeal period begins the day following the date the legal notice of the decision is published in *The Bulletin*, Bend, Oregon, official newspaper of record. The Notice of Appeal must be filed with the Reviewing Officer at:

***Appeal Deciding Officer, Pacific Northwest Region, USDA Forest Service
Attn. 1570 Appeals, 333 S.W. First Avenue, PO Box 3623, Portland, OR 97208-3623***

Appeals can also be filed electronically at: appeals-pacificnorthwest-regional-office@fs.fed.us, fax to 503-808-2339, or hand-delivered to the above address between 7:45 am and 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday except legal holidays. The appeal must be postmarked or delivered within 45 days of the date the legal notice for this decision appears in the Bend Bulletin newspaper. The publication date of the legal notice in *The Bulletin* newspaper is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal and those wishing to appeal should not rely on dates or timeframes provided by any other source.

Electronic appeals must be submitted as part of the actual e-mail message, or as an attachment in Microsoft Word (.doc), rich text format (.rtf) or portable document format (.pdf) only. E-mails submitted to e-mail addresses other than the one listed above or in other formats than those listed or containing viruses will be rejected.

It is the responsibility of those who expressed an interest during the comment period and wish to appeal a decision to provide the Regional Forester sufficient written evidence and rationale to show why the decision should be changed or reversed. The appeal must be filed with the Appeal Deciding Officer (§ 215.8) in writing. At a minimum, an appeal must include the following:

1. Appellant's name and address (§ 215.2), with a telephone number, if available;
2. Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the appeal);
3. When multiple names are listed on an appeal, identification of the lead appellant (§ 215.2) and verification of the identity of the lead appellant upon request;
4. The name of the project or activity for which the decision was made, the name and title of the Responsible Official, and the date of the decision;

5. The regulation under which the appeal is being filed, when there is an option to appeal under either this part or part 251, subpart C (§ 215.11(d));
6. Any specific change(s) in the decision that the appellant seeks and rationale for those changes;
7. Any portion(s) of the decision with which the appellant disagrees, and explanation for the disagreement;
8. Why the appellant believes the Responsible Official's decision failed to consider the comments and;
9. How the appellant believes the decision specifically violates law, regulation, or policy.

Contact Persons

For additional information concerning the specific activities authorized with this decision, you may contact Joan Kittrell, Interdisciplinary Team Leader or Holly Jewkes, District Ranger at the Crescent Ranger District, P.O. Box 208, Crescent, Oregon, 97733; or by phone at (541) 433-3200.

I want to thank those of you who took the time to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Your interest in this project is appreciated.

Sincerely,

/s/ Holly Jewkes
HOLLY JEWKES
District Ranger